

# URBAN AGRICULTURE AND INNOVATIVE PRODUCTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PUBLIC MEETING  
FEBRUARY 23, 2023 | 3:30 PM – 6:00 PM ET  
ZOOM FOR GOVERNMENT

## MEETING MINUTES

The Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Advisory Committee (UAIPAC) is established by section 12302 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill), Public Law 115-334, 7 U.S.C. § 6923(b)(1), to advise the Secretary of Agriculture on the development of policies and outreach relating to urban, indoor, and other emerging agriculture production practices; and other aspects of the implementation of that section of the Farm Bill. This Federal advisory committee operates in compliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended.

In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the UAIPAC was convened for its third public meeting on February 23, 2023, from 3:30 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. The meeting was open to the public and held fully virtually via Zoom webinar.

A [Federal Register notice](#) was published on January 30, 2023, providing general information and public participation details for the meeting. Secondary notices were also sent out to the public directly by the agency.

Committee web page: <https://www.usda.gov/partnerships/federal-advisory-committee-urban-ag>.

General inquiries: [UrbanAgricultureFederalAdvisoryCommittee@usda.gov](mailto:UrbanAgricultureFederalAdvisoryCommittee@usda.gov).

## ACRONYMS

- **DFO** – Designated Federal Officer
- **FSA** – Farm Service Agency
- **NRCS** – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- **OUAIP** – Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production
- **UAIPAC** – Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Advisory Committee
- **USDA** – United States Department of Agriculture

## MEETING AGENDA

Item #	Topic
1.	Opening of Meeting/Roll Call
2.	Opening Remarks
3.	Addressing Public Comments
4.	Deliberations/Recommendations
5.	Public Forum (oral comments)
6.	Closing Remarks

## MEETING ATTENDANCE

Name	Represented Group	Present	Attendance Type
Allison Papp	Financial Entity	✓	Virtual
Angie Mason (Chairperson)	Related Experience	✓	Virtual
Bobby Wilson	Urban Production	✓	Virtual
Carl P. Wallace	Non-Profit	✓	Virtual
Jerry Ann Hebron	Urban Production	✓	Virtual
John Erwin	Higher Education	✓	Virtual
John Lebeaux	Business/Economic Development	✓	Virtual
Kaben Smallwood	Innovative Production	✓	Virtual
Sally Brown	Higher Education	✓	Virtual
Tara Chadwick (Co-Chairperson)	Related Experience	✓	Virtual
Viraj Puri	Innovative Production	☒	N/A
Zachari Curtis	Food Supply Chain	✓	Virtual

USDA Staff	
Name	Position/Title
Brian Guse	Designated Federal Officer
Markus Holliday	Federal Advisory Committee Coordinator
Matthew Goldsboro	Federal Advisory Committee Assistant

The general public attendance list can be found [here](#).

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment period was open from January 30, 2023 to March 9, 2023. Written comments can be viewed here: <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/NRCS-2023-0003/comments>. Comments are reviewed and may be considered for further discussion at a future public meeting. Oral comments were also accepted and can be listened to and/or read via closed captioning here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bHs551OvzgQ>.

## MEETING MINUTES

### Opening of Meeting

*Markus Holliday (Federal Advisory Committee Coordinator)* welcomed and thanked everyone for joining. He also took attendance of committee members to ensure the meeting had a quorum.

### Designated Federal Officer (DFO) Opening Remarks

*Brian Guse (DFO)* called the meeting to order and announced the USDA Secretary approved for the Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Advisory Committee (UAIPAC) to be chartered for an additional two-years to continue forming recommendations. He also acknowledged the overwhelming amount of public interest to provide oral comments and explained that the meeting agenda would unfortunately not allow to hear from every single individual. He also provided instructions to submit written comments for those that were interested.

### Associate Chief Opening Remarks

*Louis Aspey (Associate Chief)* thanked the committee and audience for their commitment to urban, small scale, and innovative agriculture. He explained the importance of the committee's recommendations and encouraged them to move forward despite the bureaucratic challenges.

### **Designated Federal Officer (DFO) Opening Remarks (continued)**

*Brian Guse (DFO)* continued his opening remarks by going over the meeting agenda and providing an overview of the purpose and priorities of the UAIPAC.

### **Addressing Public Comments**

- *Brian Guse (DFO)* provided an overview of the public comment process including instructions for how to submit written comments.
- *Angie Mason (Chair)* addressed previous public comments regarding coming up with better ways to simplify the USDA grant process, Farm Service Agency (FSA) microloan process, and ensuring recommendations will have a long-term positive impact.
- *Tara Chadwick (Co-Chair)* addressed a previous public comment regarding a request for the public to view proposed recommendations on screen during public meetings.
- *Bobby Wilson (Member)* made additional comments regarding USDA subsidizing big agriculture and a need for the committee to figure out how to do the same for *urban* agriculture.

### **Deliberations/Recommendations**

*Brian Guse (DFO)* provided an overview of deliberation and voting ground rules.

**Note:** See slides/meeting recording for full recommendations.

#### **Proposed Recommendation #1:**

*Create a public/online database that would serve as the aggregation point for a comprehensive updated list of programs for funding, incentives, and support available to urban farmers and*

*innovative producers and share these opportunities to access funding and support in ways that are culturally and linguistically appropriate.*

- **Tara Chadwick (Co-Chair)** presented recommendation.
- **Kaben Smallwood (Member)** commented on the specification of sub-groups to ensure the recommendation is written in a way that clearly demonstrates diversity and inclusion to avoid discrimination.
- **Carl P. Wallace (Member)** responded that he agrees with the comment of Kaben Smallwood.
- **John Erwin (Member)** also responded to agree with the comment of Kaben Smallwood.
- **Bobby Wilson (Member)** commented that recommendations should be written in a language that the average person can understand.
- **Zachari Curtis (Member)** commented to raise a concern regarding how the committee is using terminology for various social and racial groups.
- **Sally Brown (Member)** commented to recommend the committee use relatively formal and policy appropriate language followed by a short paragraph that translates to more normal speech.
- **Bobby Wilson (Member)** questioned how does the recommendation benefit producers.
- **Tara Chadwick (Co-Chair)** responded that the database would serve as one virtual and central location for farmers/producers to learn their potential eligibility for all USDA programs and services. Also, for the purpose of sharing demographic information that shows who is utilizing the programs and services to perform assessments.
- **Tara Chadwick (Co-Chair)** read out an additional sub-bullet of the recommendation and noted there may be potential to make changes based on the similarity with a separate recommendation.
- **Sally Brown (member)** commented that one of the sub-bullets covers two different topics.
- **Bobby Wilson (member)** commented to recommend cost sharing be added to the recommendation sub-bullets.
- **John Erwin (member)** commented that it would be helpful for the committee to review public comments before voting on the recommendation.

**FINAL RESULT:**

Recommendation tabled for further deliberation. No votes recorded.

**Proposed Recommendation #2:**

*Conduct a review of Farm Service Agency (FSA) Microloan Program to determine overall utilization, program effectiveness, and typical timelines required from inquiry to funding.*

- **Allison Paap (member)** presented recommendation.
- **Tara Chadwick (Co-Chair)** commented that the proposed recommendations being presented (1-4) were previously discussed during the last public meeting (November 2022) which resulted in a consensus vote to postpone voting until the committee had additional time to make updates.

**FINAL RESULT:**

Recommendation tabled for further deliberation. No votes recorded.

**Proposed Recommendation #3:**

*Add SNAP participation as a criteria for eligibility to vote on or serve on a local USDA county or urban committee. In addition, track and publish the impacts of the ending of SNAP emergency food waivers.*

**Tara Chadwick (Co-Chair)** presented recommendation.

**FINAL RESULT:**

Recommendation tabled for further deliberation. No votes recorded.

**Proposed Recommendation #4:**

*Provide guidance to local governments and private citizens on best practices and resources to assist in accessing, maintain and keeping land in urban and innovative agricultural and conservation use.*

- *Tara Chadwick (Co-Chair)* presented recommendation.
- *John Erwin (Member)* commented that the recommendation was the most succinct and motioned to call for voting.
- *Bobby Wilson (Member)* asked for the recommendation to be repeated before voting.
- *Tara Chadwick (Co-Chair)* responded to repeat the recommendation.
- *Angie Mason (Chair)* yielded to *Brian Guse (DFO)* to call for a vote.

#### **FINAL RESULT:**

Committee members unanimously voted in favor of passing recommendation 4 to the USDA Secretary.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE BREAK (5 min)**

#### **Public Forum (Oral Comments)**

The public forum commenced for approximately 50 minutes. To listen to and/or read oral comments via closed captioning visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bHs551OvzgQ>.

**Note:** Oral comments begin at the 1 hour 35-minute mark.

#### **Closing Remarks**

*Brian Guse (DFO)* thanked the committee members and the public for their participation. He also acknowledged the comments submitted via Zoom chat during the meeting and followed-up by reiterating the instructions for the public to provide written comments/statements. He also announced the planned nomination period for future member vacancies and provided instructions on how to obtain additional information through [www.usda.gov/urban](http://www.usda.gov/urban).

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:00 P.M EST.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

/s/

Brian Guse

Designated Federal Officer

Urban Agriculture and Innovative

Production Advisory Committee

/s/

Angie Mason

Chairperson

Urban Agriculture and Innovative

Production Advisory Committee